

Political Profile of Women in Massachusetts

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**Did you
know..?**

ute Center for Women in Politics and Public Policy, University of Massachusetts Boston
ENTS and the Massachusetts Women's Political Caucus

At the national level

- Massachusetts has no women in the U.S. Congress.
- There has never been a woman from Massachusetts in the U.S. Senate.
- There have only been three women from Massachusetts in the U.S. House of Representatives:

Margaret M. Heckler (R) 1967 - 1983

Louise Day Hicks (D) 1971 - 1973

Edith Nourse Rogers (R) 1925 - 1960

At the state level

- Massachusetts has never had a woman governor.
- There has been only one woman elected to statewide office in Massachusetts:

Evelyn F. Murphy (D) 1987 - 1990
Lieutenant Governor

- Only 23% of Massachusetts state legislators are women.
- Four of the seven African Americans in the state legislature are women.

At the local level

- Of the 351 communities in Massachusetts, 126 (36%) have no women on their councils or boards above the school committee level.
- Only five of the 42 mayoral positions in Massachusetts are held by women.
- Only 19% of elected municipal officials above the school committee level in Massachusetts are women.

Rankings:

How does Massachusetts compare?

When compared to all other states, Massachusetts ranked...

37TH FOR THE NUMBER OF WOMEN IN ELECTED OFFICE

This ranking includes state and national level elected offices only.

30TH FOR THE OVERALL POLITICAL PARTICIPATION OF WOMEN

This composite ranking compared the number of women who registered to vote, the number who voted, the number of women elected officials at the state and federal levels, and women's institutional resources in the states (commissions for women or other organizations).

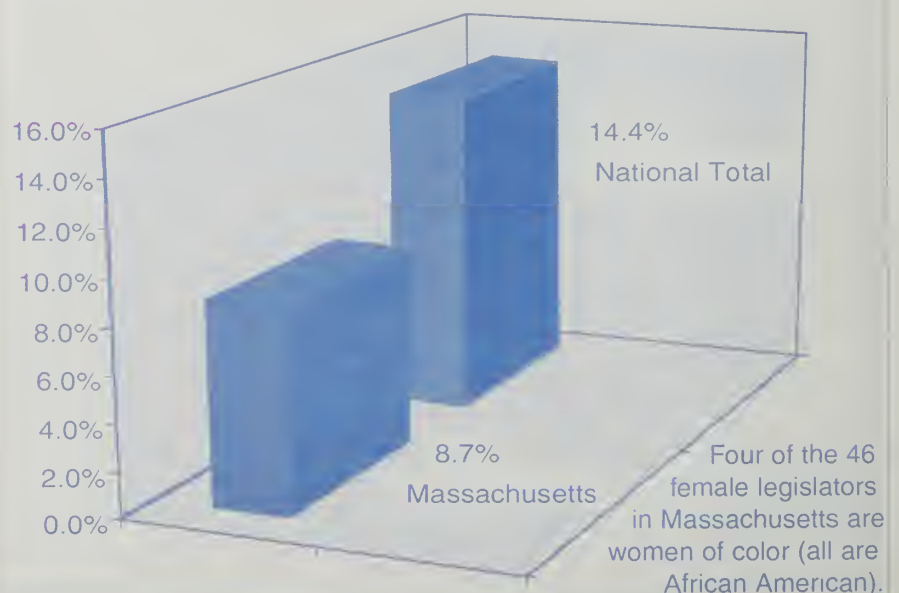
22ND FOR THE NUMBER OF WOMEN IN THE STATE LEGISLATURE

23% (46) of the Massachusetts state legislators are women.

WOMEN STATE LEGISLATORS, 1997 Rankings for Massachusetts When Compared to New England States and the Nation

State	New England Ranking	National Ranking	% of Women Legislators
Vermont	1st	5th	31.7%
New Hampshire	2nd	6th	30.9%
Connecticut	3rd	10th	28.3%
Rhode Island	4th	13th	26.0%
Maine	5th	15th	25.8%
Massachusetts	6th	22nd	23.0%

WOMEN OF COLOR STATE LEGISLATORS, 1997 Massachusetts Compared to National Total



The Massachusetts Paradox:

Significant Achievements, But Low Political Attainment

The Paradox

Massachusetts ranks fourth nationally (and first in New England) in a recent composite index of women's economic and educational status published by the Institute for Women's Policy Research.

And, as can be seen below, Massachusetts has the highest percentages in the six New England states of women in managerial and professional occupations and of women with four or more years of college. In terms of resources available to women, Massachusetts ranks only second behind Connecticut in median annual earnings for full-time employed women.

The paradox is that, unlike in many states, Massachusetts women have not been able to translate high achievement on the key indicators of occupation and education into equally high levels of political attainment.

WOMEN'S ECONOMIC AND EDUCATIONAL STATUS Massachusetts Compared to New England States

State	Women with Four or More Years of College 1990	Employed Women: Managerial/ Professional Occupations 1994	Median Annual Earnings for Full-Time Employed Women 1990
Massachusetts	24.1%	34.9%	\$22,000
Connecticut	23.8%	31.3%	\$23,000
Vermont	23.2%	32.1%	\$18,000
New Hampshire	21.1%	31.1%	\$19,800
Rhode Island	18.0%	29.9%	\$18,833
Maine	17.2%	28.5%	\$16,537

THE GENDER GAP IN MASSACHUSETTS

According to the 1996 McCormack Institute Poll, a substantial gender gap exists on policy positions, candidate preferences, and political ambition.

Ω 67% of women rated government funding for child care a top or very important priority compared to 55% of men.

Ω 72% of women feel that government should do more to prevent violence compared to 64% of men.

Ω 60% of women see the need for a constitutional amendment to keep abortion legal compared to 43% of men.

Ω Women have been credited with being the determining factor in the recent Senate race: 59% of women (vs. 51% of men) voted for John Kerry and 38% of women (vs. 45% of men) voted for William Weld.

Ω 51% of women say the country would be better off with more women in political leadership as compared to 32% of men.

Ω **But only 8% of women** said they have considered running for political office as compared to 18% of men.

Women's Political Action Agenda

What do women need to advance politically?

- ☆ Mentors
- ☆ Support of women's organizations
- ☆ Contributions of time and/or money
- ☆ Support of political parties
- ☆ Fair coverage in the press
- ☆ Support of other women
- ☆ Encouragement to run for office
- ☆ Networks! Networks! Networks!

What can I do as an individual?

- ✓ Register to vote and vote
- ✓ Join a political organization
- ✓ Contribute time and/or money to the campaign of a woman you support
- ✓ Join a local committee or board
- ✓ Talk about women running for office with your friends and family
- ✓ Run for office
- ✓ Promote the education and training of young women leaders

Data Sources Include:

- Center for the American Woman and Politics, *Women in Elective Office 1997*; and *Women Elected Officials: A Fifty State Resource*, 1996
- Institute for Women's Policy Research, *The Status of Women in the States*, 1996
- The Center for Women in Government, *Appointed Policy Makers in State Government: The Regional Profile*, 1997
- The McCormack Institute for Public Affairs, *Opportunities and Dilemmas for Women Elected Municipal Officials in Massachusetts*, by Elizabeth A. Sherman and Susan H. Rohrbach, 1996 and *The University of Massachusetts McCormack Institute Poll*, 1996
- Women Officeholders in Massachusetts: Leadership and Policy Priorities*, by Anne Marie Cammisa, 1997

For more information

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The Center for Women in Politics and Public Policy serves as a catalyst for the participation of women from diverse social, cultural, and economic backgrounds in the political life of the Commonwealth and the nation. Established in 1994 as part of the McCormack Institute of Public Affairs at the University of Massachusetts Boston, the Center sponsors research, policy development, graduate education, seminars and conferences related to both women's role in political life and to the impact of public policies on women's lives. To learn more and keep up-to-date on our calendar of events, visit our web site at www.umb.edu/COMMUNITY_CONNECTIONS/Centers&Institutes/Women/Women.html.

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The Massachusetts Women's Political Caucus, a multi-partisan membership organization and state affiliate of the National Women's Political Caucus, has a mission to recruit, train, and help elect and appoint qualified pro-choice women to all levels of government. The MWPC Education Fund provides women with the training, forums, and educational resources needed to improve their political awareness and effectiveness.

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